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Cynthia Bryant
Director
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
1400 Tenth St
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Ms. Bryant:

The Council of Fresno County Governments (Fresno COG) would like to thank the Strategic Growth Council for the early release of Proposition 84 funds to the Metropolitan planning Organization's to support the development of the Modeling Improvement Programs (MIP). This infusion of funds was exactly the type of strategic building block vital to the development of Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) under SB375 goals. However, while the early release of modeling improvement funds was a significant boost, much work remains.

Upon reviewing the draft guidelines for programming the remaining Proposition 84 funds, the Council of Fresno County Governments has major concerns that the program objectives are rather broad for the amount of remaining funds available. As with the early release, we must continue to think and act strategically about the allocation of resources toward the primary goals of SB375 and SCS development. Without a carefully focused strategy and a more narrowly defined list of supportive priorities, Proposition 84 funds are at risk of being too widely and too thinly spread across interested stakeholder groups. This grant program can not afford to be all things to all stakeholders.

The Council of Fresno County Governments supports the recommendation for two distinct grant programs as proposed by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) in their November 25, 2009 letter to the Strategic Growth Council (SGC) as follows:

A Regional Sustainable Communities Plan Program with a 1/3 allocation of remaining Proposition 84 funds directed toward regional agencies and;

A Local Sustainable Communities Plan Program with a 2/3 allocation of remaining Proposition 84 funds directed toward local agencies.

It is imperative that in both the regional and local programs, the focus remains on the ongoing development of SCS under SB 375. Moreover, the Council of Fresno County Governments concurs that local agency applications from regions without an adopted blueprint should be evaluated by the Strategic Growth Council and prioritized based upon which one's "best achieve the

Member Agencies: The cities of Clovis, Coalinga, Firebaugh, Fowler, Fresno, Huron, Kerman, Kingsburg, Mendota, Orange Cove, Parlier, Reedley, San Joaquin, Sanger, Selma & Fresno County

greenhouse gas reduction targets established by the Air Resources Board”.

Already, through its regional blueprint process, the Council of Fresno County Governments, in partnership with its local agencies, is working toward these goals. Through ongoing regional-local collaboration, planners’ resources are currently being developed for a range of community types and sizes to assist in the efforts of general plan integration. This includes the development of a general plan toolkit flexible enough to be adaptable in various jurisdictions, yet robust enough to be useful in local blueprint integration.

By reducing duplication, and maximizing economies of scale, this type of collaboration and consolidation of effort is far more useful in stretching valuable resources throughout the region than working disconcertedly. It produces more with less and has far greater efficacy in meeting the regionally adopted, blueprint preferred growth scenario; the vehicle to the SCS. In these times when every dollar must be stretched to its maximum, we should avoid duplication of effort. The focus of the remainder of the Proposition 84 program funds should remain on building the bridge between the regionally adopted blueprints and local implementation of SB375 and the development of SCS.

We look forward to working with you and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely Yours,



Tony Boren
Executive Director
Council of Fresno County Governments

Cc: Members, Strategic Growth Council